



VISN4
CENTER FOR
EVALUATION OF
PATIENT ALIGNED
CARE TEAMS



Formative Evaluation of a Virtual Learning Collaborative

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Rationale: This project is an outgrowth of our evaluation of training and resources for PACT implementation and spread. The VISN 4 Virtual Learning Collaborative has emerged as a key component of VISN 4's overall implementation/spread plan and represents an innovative attempt to address needs not met by earlier training/spread initiatives that were part of the initial PACT roll-out plan. Because existing evidence about the effectiveness of the learning collaborative model is mixed, and there is little available data on the use of a "virtual" collaborative model, VISN 4 has the opportunity to test an innovative method for encouraging organizational change. Recognizing an opportunity for productive collaboration on a project of common interest, CEPACT proposed to assist with the evaluation of the Virtual Collaborative. Results of this project will inform future change efforts and contribute to the existing knowledge base.

Aims: We aim to augment the VISN's evaluation of the Virtual Collaborative (VC) by developing and leading a multi-method qualitative component to the VISN's evaluation plan, with a specific focus on capturing the evolution of the implementation process and on assessing learner experiences and perceptions of the VC.

Stage of Development: This project is in the early stages of development. We are currently developing and piloting data collection instruments, establishing contact with key informants at each VISN 4 site, and participating in planning calls with the VC Steering Committee.

Methods: (1) Structured process diary to be kept by key implementer/coordinator of VC; (2) Anonymous survey of participating primary care providers and support staff (fielded once at mid-point and once at 6-month mark); (3) Semi-structured interviews (baseline, mid-point, and 6-month mark) with key contacts at each VISN 4 site to collect data on "offline" (between-session) components of VC, local mood, and local conditions that facilitate or impede implementation and effectiveness of VC.

Results: There are no results to report at this time, as the VC is scheduled to launch in January 2012; data collection via the process diary has begun.

Future Plans:

- Finalize process diary structure and method in collaboration with diary keeper; review diary entries every 2 weeks.
- Conduct baseline interviews with key contacts in January 2012.
- Present draft of survey to VC Steering Committee for feedback in January 2012. Revise and pilot survey in February, and finalize by early March.